

# Watchwords for the Warfare of Life, Part 1 Words for the Battle-Field, II. Rules of the Service



Martin Luther At The Diet Of Worms.

Continued from [Watchwords for the Warfare of Life – By Martin Luther Part 1 Words for the Battle-Field, I. The Commander](#)

## ***Obedience a Glorious Apparel.***

*HER clothing ts all glorious within.* What kind of glorious apparel is this? For we know that on earth Christians are poor and little esteemed. It is a spiritual adorning; not gold, silver, pearls, velvet, but obedience to the Lord our God, This apparel is brighter than the sun, for these are God's jewels. He who goes about doing God's will, goes about clothed in God's beauty. To serve Him truly, is simply to abide in our calling, be it lowly as it may.

WHEN one asked what was the best service of God, which pleased Him best? Doctor Martin said, "To hear Christ and be obedient to Him." This is the highest and greatest service of God. Besides this, all is worth no- thing. For in heaven He has far better and more beautiful worship and service than we can render. As it was said to Saul, "*To obey is better than to sacrifice.*" As also soldiers say in time of war; obedience and keeping to the articles of war –this is victory.

EVEN in philosophy men are constrained not to look on the bare work, but on the goodwill of the worker. Wherefore we must ascend up higher in divinity with this word "doing" than in natural things and philosophy, so that now it must have a new signification, and be made altogether new.

TRUE obedience to God is the obedience of faith and good works; that is, he is truly obedient to God who trusts Him and does what He commands.

CHRISTIANS have to do with two kinds of business; the Word and the works of God.

IN all works we should look to God's Word. Such works as are done at God's command, these are not from our self-will; but we are God's tools and

instruments, through which He works; they are not our own works, but God's. But all works which are not done at God's command are godless and condemned, being mere works of our own hands.

THE true doer of the law is he who, receiving the Holy Ghost through faith in Christ, beginneth to love God and to do good to his neighbor. The tree must be first, and then the fruit.

TO worship God in spirit, is the service and homage of the heart, and implies fear of God and trust in Him.

ALL Christians constitute the spiritual estate; and the only difference among them is that of the functions which they discharge.

### ***The Law and the Gospel.***

THE law discovers the disease. The gospel gives the remedy.

THE law is what we must do; the gospel what God will give.

THE gospel is like a fresh, soft, cool breeze in the great heat of summer, a comfort in anguish of conscience; not in winter, when there is already cold enough (that is in time of peace, when people are secure); but in the great heat of summer—that is, in those who truly feel terror and anguish of conscience, and God's anger against them.

THIS heat is caused by the sun. So must this terror of conscience be caused by the preaching of the law. Then must the heavenly breeze again quicken and refresh the conscience.

BUT when the powers are thus again quickened by the sweet wind of the gospel, we must not lie idly basking, we must show our faith by good works.

LIKE as the parched earth coveteth the rain, the law maketh parched and troubled souls . to thirst after Christ.

THE law is a light which enlightens us not to see God's grace nor righteousness, through which we attain to eternal life, but sin, our infirmities, death, God's anger, and judgment.

THE gospel is a far different light. It lights up the troubled heart, makes it live again, comforts and helps. For it shows how God forgives unworthy, condemned sinners for Christ's sake, when they believe that they are redeemed by His death; and that through His victory are given to them all blessings, grace, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal life.

### ***The Law a Fire.***

THE law is that hammer, that fire, that mighty and strong wind, and that terrible earthquake, rending the mountains and shivering the rocks. But it behooved that the tempest, the fire, the wind, the earthquake, should pass, before the Lord should reveal Himself in the still small voice.

### ***The Law a Prison.***

THE law is a prison, both civilly and spiritually. For, first, it restraineth and shutteth up the wicked; furthermore, by revealing sin, it shutteth man up in a prison, out of which he cannot escape.

### ***The Law a Schoolmaster.***

THE law is not barely a schoolmaster, but a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. For what a schoolmaster were he which should alway torment and beat the child, and teach him nothing at all? And yet such schoolmasters there were in times past, when schools were nothing else but a prison and a very hell; the schoolmasters cruel tyrants and very butchers; the children were always beaten; they learned with continual pain and travail, and yet few of them came to any proof. The law is not such a schoolmaster. For it doth not only terrify and torment. It instructeth, and exerciseth, and with its rods driveth us to Christ.

"IF Moses comes to judge me," said Doctor Martin, "I will motion him away, in God's name, and say, 'Here stands Christ.' And at the Last Day, Moses will look on me and say, 'Thou hast understood me aright.' And he will be gracious to me."

### ***The Law a Wall of Defense.***

BY the Ten Commandments the Lord hath defended and fortified the life of man, his wife and children, and his goods, as it were with a wall, against the force and violence of the wicked.

### ***The Decalogue to be taught Affirmatively.***

THE Decalogue (that, is the Ten Commandments of God) is a mirror and brief summary of all virtues, and teaches how we should conduct ourselves towards God and towards man. And no more beautiful, perfect, and shorter book of virtues was ever written.

The virtue of the First Commandment is godliness; that is, to fear, love, and trust God.

Of the Second, to confess and preach the doctrine of God's word.

Of the Third, public worship of God.

Of the Fourth, obedience to parents, preceptors, and rulers in that which is not contrary to God.

Of the Fifth, gentleness, not to be revengeful.

Of the Sixth, chastity and sobriety.

Of the Seventh, to do good, willingly give and lend, and be generous.

Of the Eighth, truth, to injure no one's good name, to speak good of each

other.

Of the Ninth, justice, to let each enjoy his own.

Of the Tenth, to be without evil desires in the heart, and to be content with our own. The Ten Commandments are to be understood and explained as not only forbidding, but bidding. "The chief commandment is love from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned."

THAT word, "*Thou shalt have none other gods before Me,*" once seemed to me useless and superfluous under the gospel. When I read it first, I thought, "Ah, who does not know that?" But now, thank God, I see what the words mean; indeed, they are more wonderful than any man can explain or comprehend.

***Short Sayings about the Catechism as Dr. Martin Luther taught wt at Home.***

THE COMMANDMENTS

AS faith is, so is God. God does not remain outside, although He delays.

Idolatry is essentially darkness of heart.

God gives through creatures.

Unthankfulness is theft.

No one should be judged in his absence.

Interpret all for the best.

No good work goes beyond the Ten Commandments.

To fear and trust God is fulfilling all the Commandments.

The First Commandment includes all the rest.

THE CREED.

GOD gives Himself to us with all the creatures.

The Holy Spirit brings Christ home to us.

Where the Holy Spirit does not preach, there is no church.

The work of the Holy Spirit is going forward perpetually.

GOOD WORKS.

THE good works of Christians are to benefit and help our neighbors.

In tribulations we should be manly and of a good heart.

Our whole life should be manly, fearing and trusting God.

Faith makes us the inheritance of Christ.

The gospel is pure joy.

The person must be good before his works.

"A Christian life consists in three things—in faith, love, and the cross." Elsewhere he says, "Faith, confession, and the cross make a true Christian."

A clergyman is like the director of a hospital. God's gifts which we possess, we should esteem highly; ourselves humbly.

THE Decalogue is a doctrine beyond all doctrines. The Apostles' Creed is virtue beyond all virtues. The Lord's Prayer is a prayer beyond all prayers and Litanies; moreover, it is a joy above all joys. For as the Ten Commandments teach and exhort all in the freest and fullest way, so the Creed fulfills the same in the most thorough way, and the Lord's Prayer asks and entreats all in the most Christian and certain way. Therefore this threefold cord makes a man perfect in thought, speech, and work, ordering and educating his heart, mind, tongue, and body to the highest perfection.

### ***The Decalogue based on Redemption.***

THUS saith God, "*I am the Lord thy God, who led thee out of the land of Egypt.*" Because God can only be known through His acts and works. He points us to a glorious act whereby we may know what a God we honor and serve—namely, the God who delivered Israel from the house of bondage; the God who has given us His Word, and His Son Christ, who has suffered and died for us; the God who awakened Him again from the dead.

### ***Fulfilling the Duties of our Calling the best Service of God.***

ST. PAUL in his Epistles has written more fully and wisely of virtues and good works than all the philosophers, for he exalts and gloriously commends the works of each man's calling.

HE said, "Master Joachim Morlein has pleased me well to-day with his sermon, for he spoke of the office and vocation of a wife, and a maid-servant—namely, that a wife should think she lives in a Holy Order, and that a servant also may know that her works are good and holy works. This the people can carry home."

IF a peasant knew the perils and toils of a prince, he would thank God that he was a peasant, and in the happiest and safest state. But the peasants know not their happiness and welfare. They look only on the outside pomp of princes, their fine clothes, golden chains, great castles, and houses; but see not the care and peril wherein princes live, as in a fire and a deluge.

PEASANTS' work is among the happiest, for it is full of hope. Ploughing, sowing, planting, propping, pruning, mowing, threshing, wood-cutting, are all labors full of hope.

SO, also, men and maidens in a house are often better off than their masters and mistresses, for they have no household cares—have only to do their work, and when this is done, it is done; and they can eat, and drink, and sing. My

Wolf, and Orthe (Dorothea), my man, and my cook, are better off than my Kattie or I, for married life and the ordering of a household bring with them their trials and the holy cross.

HE spoke of the legends of the holy Patriarchs, how far they exceeded the holiness of (reputed) saints, because they simply went on their way, In obedience to God, in the works of their calling, and did what came to their hand to do, according to God's commandment, without choosing for themselves.

### ***Two Vocations, of Faith and of Love.***

NO one can understand any work aright unless he is called to it.

Vocation is of two kinds. Either it is divine, comes from above, or from those who have the right to command; and then it is a Vocation of Faith.

Or it is a Vocation of Love, and comes from our equals.

### ***Two Sacrifices.***

THE first was called in the Old Testament the early or morning sacrifice. By this it was shadowed forth that we should first sacrifice to God, not calves and oxen, but *ourselves*, acknowledging God's gifts, both bodily and Spiritual, temporal and eternal, and giving Him thanks.

The second the evening sacrifice. By this it was signified that a Christian should offer to God a broken, lowly, contrite heart, which confesses both its sin and danger, bodily and spiritual, and cries to God for help.

### ***What Obedience meant to Luther.***

#### **AT THE DIET OF WORMS.**

"HERE I stand: I can do no otherwise. God help me. Amen."

#### **AT AUGSBURG.**

"THREE whole days I was at Augsburg, without the Imperial safe-conduct. Meantime they earnestly entreated me to say 'Revoco.' (recant)

"After three days the Bishop of Trent came and showed me the safe-conduct. Then I went in all humility to the Cardinal; fell at first on my knee; the second time on the ground; the third time prostrate there so long that three times he bid me rise. Then I arose. That pleased him much. He hoped I would think better of it.

"When I came to the Cardinal the second time, and would not recant, he said:

"'What meanest thou? Dost think the princes will defend thee with arms and armies? Surely, no! Where, then, wilt thou take refuge?'

"I said, 'Under heaven.'"

#### **DURING THE PLAGUE AT WITTENBURG.**

“IF the lot fell on me, I would not shrink from the plague. I have been with many when they had it. I have now remained through three pestilences without fleeing.”

***Merit.***

MERIT is a work for the sake of which Christ gives rewards. But no such work is to be found, for Christ gives by promise. Just as if a prince were to say to me: “Come to me in my castle, and I will give you a hundred florins.” I do a work, certainly, in going to the castle, but the gift is not given me as the reward of my work in going, but because the prince promised it me.

Continued in [Part 1 Words for the Battle-Field, III. The Weapons of Our Warfare.](#)

**All sections of Watchwords for the Warfare of Life**

- [Part 1 Words for the Battle-Field, I. The Commander](#)
- [II. Rules of the Service](#)
- [III. The Weapons of Our Warfare.](#)
- [IV. The Armies of Heaven](#)
- [V. The Enemy](#)
- [Part Second. Words For The Day's March. I. The Leader](#)
- [II. Special Graces](#)
- [Part Third. Words For The Halting-Places. I. The Visible Creation](#)